



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Cong. Kind Office Stands Ready to Help with Medicare Rx Enrollment

Federal Drug Benefit Enrollment Runs from November 15, 2005 to May 15, 2006

Washington, DC –U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) announced today that his office is standing by to help those who qualify for the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit by providing them with basic information about the program in addition to referrals to organizations that can help qualifying beneficiaries choose the most affordable prescription drug plan.

The enrollment period for the federal drug program opens today, November 15, 2005, and will extend to May 15, 2006. Even though the benefit begins on January 1, 2006, qualifying beneficiaries have until May 15, 2006, to sign up and are encouraged to take their time deciding what option is best for them. Rep. Kind recently sent a district-wide letter to seniors 60 years and older with information regarding the new prescription drug option and offers additional resources on his website www.house.gov/kind or on request by calling the toll free number at (888) 442-8040.

“Many have expressed concern over the confusing nature of the registration process mainly stemming from the large menu of benefit plans they have to choose from,” stated Rep. Kind. “It is important that those considering the new Medicare drug benefit are well-informed about their options and have access to the right resources in order to determine what drug plan will provide them with the most affordable prescription drugs.”

Anyone who is on Medicare is eligible for prescription drug coverage; in Wisconsin 719,720 people qualify. Sixty-eight plans are available to Wisconsin residents. Under the typical plan, seniors will pay a monthly premium (averaging \$32). Many plans have a deductible of \$250. After that, beneficiaries pay 25 percent of costs up to \$2,250; 100 percent of costs up to \$5,100, and 5 percent of costs after that. Plans are varied, however, and not all follow this model.

Due to efforts by Congressman Kind, Governor Doyle, and other members of the Wisconsin delegation, it was recently announced that Wisconsin's state-run drug program, SeniorCare will be extended through June 30, 2007, and Wisconsin senior citizens can chose to stay in the state drug program without penalization.

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“I am pleased that the SeniorCare program will continue to be available without penalty for at least another year and a half,” stated Rep. Kind. “Seniors who are in SeniorCare should think very carefully about staying in this state program, as it is a better deal for many of them.”

Attached is a document with bulleted facts about the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program as well as contact information for key organizations prepared to answer questions and assist with enrollment. Please feel free to print this resource list.